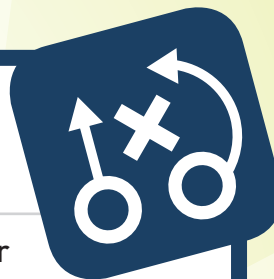


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GAME PLAN



Children ages 5-18 spend, on average, 7 hours a day in school or at school-related functions. What children are offered to eat, whether it's a school meal, a baked good offered during a classroom celebration, a 20-ounce drink from the vending machine, or a snack handed out after sports practice matters.

The health of our children has been negatively impacted by readily available, low-quality, high-calorie, less healthy food and beverages over the last 30 years. This change coincides with decreasing levels of physical activity and the rise in childhood obesity. Currently, 1 out of 3 children living in Michigan are overweight or obese. Being overweight or obese does not equate to being well-nourished. Nutrient deficiencies, such as Vitamin D, iron and Vitamin B12 are seen more frequently in obese and overweight children.¹⁻³ Today, children are being diagnosed with health conditions previously only seen in adults, such as insulin resistance, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, asthma, and high cholesterol.⁴

It's easy to forget about the serious nature and consequences of obesity and poor nutrition when it becomes so commonplace. Let's not forget that while making positive changes is important to reduce childhood obesity, it is also critical to improve the health of all children no matter what their shape or size.

The solution must include schools. Michigan schools reach more than 1.5 million children a day, over 180 days a year! The *Michigan Nutrition Standards* are about making healthy food and beverage choices easy choices for students at schools. In this tab you will find fact sheets and information that you can use to illustrate the importance of nutrition standards and to help you make the case for why it is vitally important to implement the *Michigan Nutrition Standards* at your school and in your district.

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WHAT ARE THE *MICHIGAN NUTRITION STANDARDS*?

Parents, families, schools, and communities are working together toward a common goal: to educate students and prepare them for successful futures. Making sure students are fit, healthy, and ready to learn is one piece of the larger puzzle.

“Healthy” can be defined in many different ways. One part of being healthy is eating nutrient-rich food and beverages to prevent chronic disease, like heart disease and diabetes, and to promote a healthy weight. Currently, there is a lot of confusion about what kids should be offered to eat at school and at home.

Nutrition Standards are a list of criteria for food and beverages that are made available to students at school and at school-related functions. The *Michigan Nutrition Standards* were created based on national standards. These standards help provide the guidance for students to make the healthiest choices possible, and to make the healthy choice the easy choice.

The *Michigan Nutrition Standards* address food and beverages offered and sold in many places in addition to the school cafeteria; such as school vending machines, a la carte/snack lines, and at classroom parties. It’s important that students get a clear and consistent message about what’s healthy, wherever food and beverages are offered at school.

The purpose of the *Michigan Nutrition Standards* is to give guidance to Michigan schools on what food and beverages should be offered and which ones should be limited.



THE *MICHIGAN NUTRITION STANDARDS* PROVIDE GUIDANCE FOR...

- **SCHOOL MEALS**—Meals that emphasize food and beverages with specific health benefits such as: colorful fruits and vegetables, whole grains, low fat dairy, beans, nuts and lean proteins.
- **A LA CARTE/SNACK LINES**—Students are offered healthy food and beverages that will help create or supplement a meal and prepare them for a day of learning.
- **VENDING MACHINES**—Students are offered healthy food and beverages, not just low-quality, calorie-dense “snack” food and beverages.
- **CLASSROOM PARTIES**—It’s recommended that classrooms aim for a balance of healthy and less healthy options during classroom parties and celebrations to help students practice moderation.
- **CLASSROOM REWARDS**—Students are offered non-food rewards to create a healthy classroom environment and foster healthy habits for a lifetime.
- **SCHOOL-DAY FUNDRAISING**—Fundraising will not take place right before or during school meals so students can fill up on healthy options during breakfast and lunch to keep them focused and energized.
- **CONCESSION STANDS**—Healthy options such as fruits, vegetables, low-fat and fat-free milk, yogurt, low-fat string cheese, and small bags of nuts and seeds, should be available for purchase to provide balanced choices for students, staff, and the community.



WHY HAVE NUTRITION STANDARDS?

Nutrition Standards are one way to improve the health and bright future of our children. Michigan is not alone in developing Nutrition Standards. Other states have laws that require all schools to follow their state specific standards. The *Michigan Nutrition Standards* were developed to create an environment that supports healthy eating as the first choice, the easy choice, for students, staff, and the community. Health and nutrition are a major priority with the rise of obesity in children as well as adults. In Michigan, more than 30% of children are considered overweight or obese⁵. This percentage has increased nearly 5 fold in the last 35 years. Experts agree that children of this generation will have a shorter life span than their parents⁶.



WHY IMPLEMENT THE MICHIGAN NUTRITION STANDARDS?

The Michigan State Board of Education recommends that school districts follow the *Michigan Nutrition Standards*. While the standards do not come with any additional funding, the benefits are plentiful. The standards ensure that when students eat at school or at school-related functions they have healthy food and beverages to choose from. Well-nourished students are healthy and ready to learn the lessons that school staff have worked so hard to develop. In addition, students that are healthy have fewer absences. Students that attend school more frequently, equates to more money for the schools in-state funding and less staff expense to assist students that are frequently absent to catch up to meet academic standards.

The health and academic success of Michigan's children is vital to the future of our state. The *Michigan Nutrition Standards* provide schools the guidance to be leaders in doing what is right for the children.

MAKING SMALL STEADY GAINS TO MAKE THE HEALTHY CHOICE THE EASY CHOICE

In Michigan, three school districts piloted the *Michigan Nutrition Standards* during the 2010-2011 school year. The pilot districts all reported that a culture shift took place not only in the school but also in the community. Districts noted that there was more awareness about health and nutrition in the community since focusing on nutrition standards in the schools. Pilot districts reported that grocery stores looked at placement of foods, and offered healthy food coupons; local food establishments offered whole grain options; and local convenience stores added fruits to purchase. Walking trails were created by community groups. All of these changes were a result of the school district implementation of the *Michigan Nutrition Standards*.

MICHIGAN PARENTS SUPPORT HEALTHY FOODS IN SCHOOLS

During the fall of 2010, a survey was completed to gather the opinion of Michigan parents about offering healthy food in schools. Healthy food was defined as fruits, vegetables, whole grain foods, low fat dairy and lean proteins. The telephone survey was completed with a representative sample of over 1200 parents throughout the state. The results show that Michigan parents do support a healthy food environment in schools:

- 88% of parents report that schools have a responsibility to provide healthy choices in school meals.
- 80% of parents report that schools have a responsibility to provide healthy choices in a la carte (snack lines), vending machines and school stores.
- 50% of parents report that concession stands should contain mostly or only healthy food choices.
- 50% of parents report that mostly or only healthy food choices should be offered for fundraising activities.
- 66% of parents do not think that food should be given as a reward to their children in school.
- 67% of parents support a state law for school nutrition guidelines for food and beverages offered and sold during the school day.



THE LINK BETWEEN NUTRITION AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Implementing the *Michigan Nutrition Standards* is one way to assure there are nutritious food and beverages offered to children while they are at school. Children's bodies and brains are continuously growing throughout elementary, middle and high school. Nutrition plays a critical role in their lives and their education.

Students that are well nourished are ready to learn. Many studies have been done that link nutrition and academic success.⁷⁻⁹ Studies point to making sure students are not starting the school day hungry. They also highlight the need to provide meals that include specific nutrients essential to improving academics. To optimize their academic potential, children need essential nutrients such as vitamins, minerals, proteins, and fat from their diet. Many children are not getting enough of these nutrients from their current diet. Students that have better diet quality such as more fruits and vegetables and lower total fat, have improved academic performance.¹⁰ When students are hungry and under nourished their school performance is affected.¹¹⁻¹³

WHAT TO EXPECT OF A HUNGRY STUDENT:

- Slower memory recall
- Hyperactive and attention problems
- In high school, more likely to be suspended and have trouble getting along with others
- Lower math scores
- More likely to repeat a grade

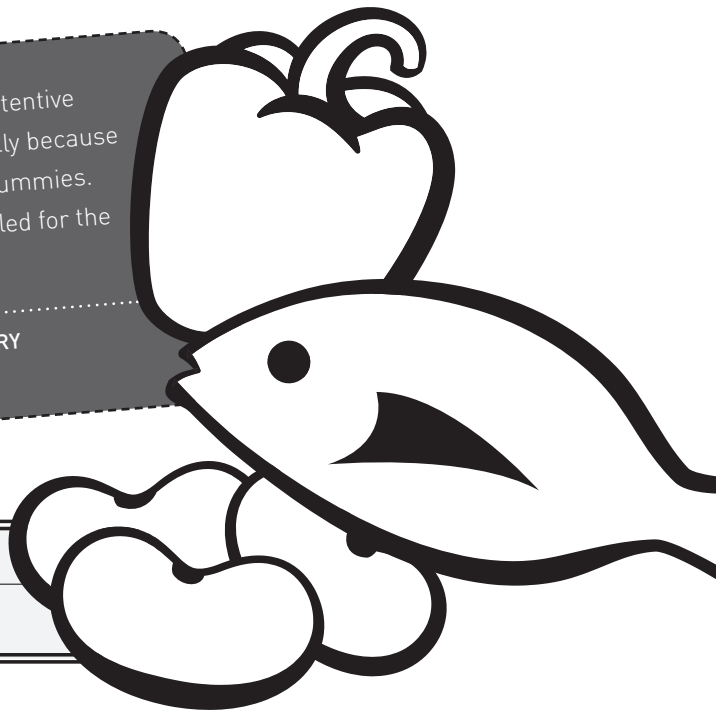
Lower test scores, low academic performance, and behavior issues have been shown in children with poor iron and protein intakes.^{14,15} By implementing the *Michigan Nutrition Standards*, schools will be offering nutrient rich foods for students throughout the school campus that can contribute to their academic success. This research helps support the need for schools to implement the *Michigan Nutrition Standards*.

"I love the breakfast program. My students are much more attentive during learning times. They are also doing better academically because of this improved attention and less distraction from hungry tummies. They do not bicker in the mornings when we are getting settled for the day because they are focused on eating breakfast."

PAM BABCOCK, FIFTH GRADE TEACHER, PINE AVENUE ELEMENTARY

NOURISH (VERB)

to promote the growth of



**DID YOU KNOW?**

- American children ages 2-18 are eating 40% of their daily calories from “empty calories,” like sugar sweetened beverages and desserts.¹⁶
- 92% of girls ages 9-18 do not get enough calcium from what they eat and drink.
- 75% of children 6-19 do not eat enough fruit every day.¹⁷
- Only 13.8% of high school students eat enough vegetables every day.¹⁸
- 65% of Michigan high school students skipped breakfast at least one day a week.¹⁸



“We have the data to show that students who eat healthier and move more learn better. The State Board of Education recognizes this important link and acted, proudly passing more policies in school health than any other area in the past 12 years.”

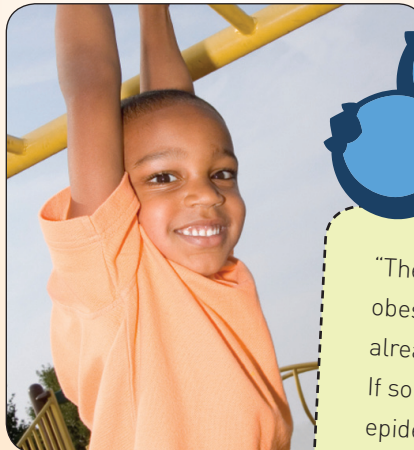
KATHLEEN STRAUS,
MICHIGAN STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION, FORMER BOARD PRESIDENT



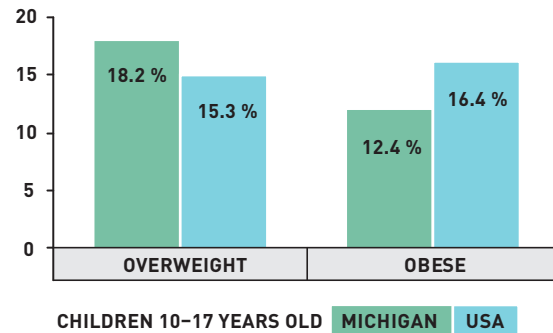


THE STATE OF THE STATE: CHILDHOOD OBESITY IN MICHIGAN

- Nearly 1 in 3 children in Michigan, ages 10-17, are overweight or obese. This would fill Ford Field to full capacity almost 7 times.⁵
- Obesity in children ages 6-11 years has increased almost 5 fold in the last 30 years.¹⁷
- Estimated medical costs of obesity in 2008 in Michigan were \$3.1 billion and will continue to rise if action is not taken.¹⁹
- Average annual total health expenses for a child treated for obesity under Medicaid is \$6,730. Average annual health cost for all children on Medicaid is \$2,446.²⁰
- Some experts warn that this is the first generation that will have a shorter life expectancy than their parents.⁶
- Children growing up today will have more chronic diseases and premature deaths from poor eating habits and lack of physical activity than from exposure to tobacco, alcohol or drugs.²¹
- 1 in 3 children born in 2000 are estimated to be diagnosed with type 2 diabetes in their lifetime.²²
- In Michigan, obese adults had estimated medical costs that were \$1,205 higher annually than persons of normal weight.¹⁹



NATIONAL SURVEY OF CHILDREN'S HEALTH, 2007



"The medical expenses and indirect costs associated with obesity place a significant burden on a health care system that already is overwhelmed and threatens our unstable economy. If something is not done to reverse the childhood obesity epidemic, our next generation can expect larger medical bills and a health care system less capable of meeting its needs."

THE ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON FOUNDATION

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL COMPLICATIONS OF CHILDHOOD OBESITY⁴

- Depression
- Poor Self-Esteem
- Bullying
- Behavior and Learning Problems
- Stress and Anxiety

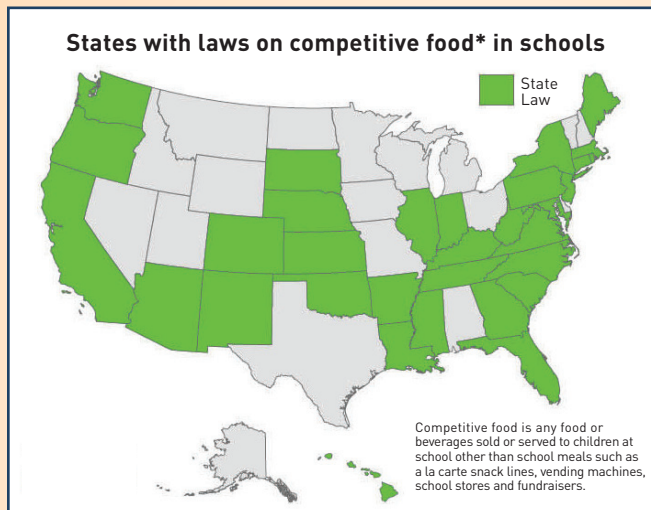
PHYSICAL COMPLICATIONS OF CHILDHOOD OBESITY⁴

- Type 2 Diabetes
- High Blood Pressure
- High Cholesterol
- Sleep Apnea
- Bone and Joint Problems
- Metabolic Syndrome
- Asthma



WHAT IS BEING DONE: NUTRITION STANDARDS IN SCHOOLS

Nutrition Standards improve the nutritional quality of food and beverages. The *Michigan Nutrition Standards* address food and beverages offered and sold on the school campus including cafeterias as well as vending machines, concession stands, a la carte snack lines, school parties, school stores, and during after-school events.



KIDS OF ALL SHAPES & SIZES ARE UNDERNOURISHED¹⁶

KIDS ARE CONSUMING TOO MUCH:

- Sugar Sweetened Beverages
- Cookies, Cakes, Doughnuts
- Pizza
- Whole Milk
- French Fries
- Chips
- Fried and Fatty Meats

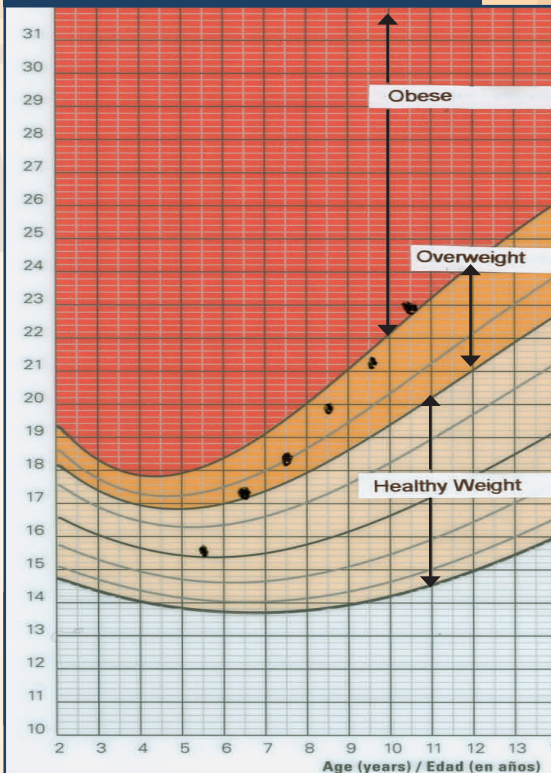
KIDS ARE NOT CONSUMING ENOUGH NUTRIENT RICH FOODS:

- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Whole Grains
- Low Fat Dairy

FACTS:

- Michigan schools reach over 1.5 million children a day, over 180 days a year.²³
- Over 196 million school breakfasts and lunches were served to Michigan students last year.²⁴
- 50% of daily energy intake is consumed at school.²⁵
- The *Michigan Nutrition Standards* emphasize colorful fruits and vegetables, whole grains, low fat dairy, beans, nuts and lean proteins.
- Research has shown that healthier students are more ready to learn and have improved classroom behavior.²⁶

BMI BOYS: 2-20 YEARS GROWTH CHART



CHILD + 100 CALORIES X 180 DAYS X 6 YEARS =
A HEALTHY CHILD BECOMES OBESE

Childhood obesity can happen gradually and innocently

RETURN ON INVESTMENT²⁷

FIT & HEALTHY STUDENTS IN SCHOOLS BECOME ADULTS WITH:

- Greater productivity
- Lower health care costs
- Less absenteeism



WORKING TOWARD HEALTH EQUITY

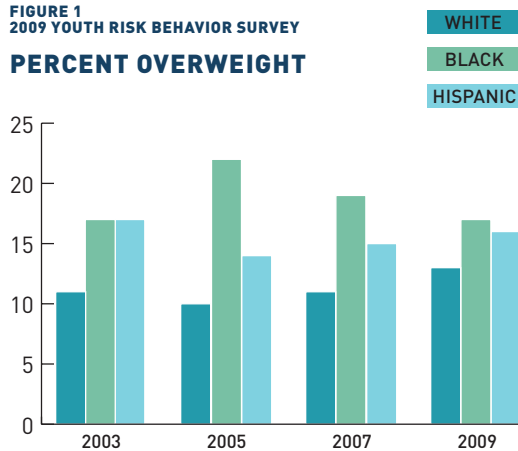
There are many compelling reasons why a school should adopt the *Michigan Nutrition Standards*. One of these is to work toward health equity. According to Healthy People 2020, health equity is defined as “the attainment of the highest level of health for all people. Achieving health equity requires valuing everyone equally with focused and ongoing societal efforts to address avoidable inequalities, historical and contemporary injustices, and the elimination of health and health care disparities.”

Addressing health equity is everyone’s responsibility. Schools and communities can play a part in improving health for all by implementing the *Michigan Nutrition Standards*. Consistently offering food and beverages that are healthy and that meet the *Michigan Nutrition Standards*, in schools throughout the state, can address some of the inequalities that exist especially when it comes to childhood obesity.

The rise in childhood obesity in the last 30 years has been alarming. Unfortunately, obesity does not affect all populations equally. Higher rates of obesity are seen in racial/ethnic minorities and children from lower socio-economic status.^{28, 29}

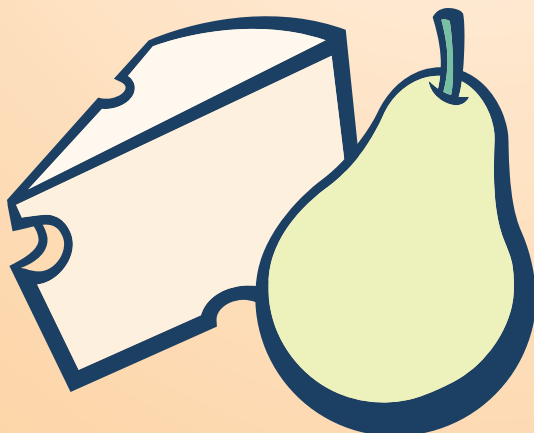
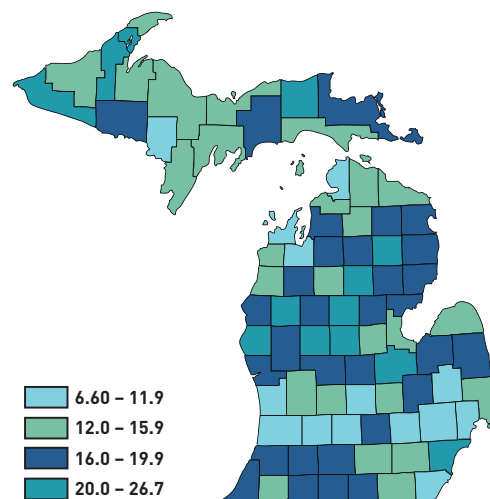
The weight inequality is illustrated in Michigan high school students in the 2009 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS).¹⁸ See Figure 1.

FIGURE 1
2009 YOUTH RISK BEHAVIOR SURVEY
PERCENT OVERWEIGHT



In some areas with higher poverty, there is a lack of access to healthy foods from full service supermarkets. Research shows that low income areas have access to half as many supermarkets as higher income areas.³⁰ See Figure 2.

FIGURE 2
PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLDS IN
POVERTY BY COUNTY, MICHIGAN 2010



NOTES: